United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General welcomes agreement reached Friday to resolve Haitian political crisis; President Aristide to return to Haiti on 30 October; United Nations and OAS to oversee dialogue aimed at peaceful transition of power.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement on Friday, expresses deep concern at reports of increased fighting in Abkhazia, Georgia; calls on parties to end military action immediately and to respect 14 May cease-fire agreement.

+ Secretary-General, in report to Security Council, says disarmament process must be effectively implemented in Somalia if UNOSOM II is to fulfill its mandate; says United Nations has shown its willingness to pay, and to exact, cost of peacemaking.

+ North American NGO Symposium on Question of Palestine, ending three-day session, recommends that United Nations co-sponsor conference on Jerusalem.

+ United Nations and Government of Eritrea to seek $111 million for reintegration of refugees at Pledging Conference for Eritrea in Geneva on 6 July.

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After almost a week of talks in New York, Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Lieutenant-General Raoul Cedras, Commander-in-Chief of the Haitian Armed Forces, signed an agreement on Friday to resolve the political crisis in Haiti. The agreement had been drafted by Dante Caputo, the Special Envoy for Haiti of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS). Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in New York, expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of the talks.

Under the agreement, President Aristide will return to Haiti on 30 October 1993, and will appoint a new Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces

(more)

to replace Lieutenant-General Cedras, who will take early retirement. The parties agreed to hold a political dialogue, under the auspices of the United Nations and the OAS, in order to reach a political truce and create the conditions necessary for a peaceful transition of power, and to establish procedures to enable the Haitian Parliament to resume its normal functioning. They also agreed that the President would nominate a Prime Minister, to be confirmed by the legally reconstituted Parliament.

The agreement further called for the suspension, on the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the sanctions imposed against Haiti by Security Council resolution 841 (1993), as soon as the Prime Minister has assumed office.

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The Security Council has called on all parties to the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, to cease military action immediately and to respect the cease-fire agreement of 14 May. In a statement read out by Council President Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom) on Friday evening, the Council expressed deep concern at reports of increased fighting around Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia.

The Council also said that it would consider, without delay, the Secretary-General's report of 1 July on the situation in Abkhazia. In that report, the Secretary-General recommended that 50 United Nations military observers be deployed to discourage the escalation of the conflict, warning that it could have severe consequences for the whole Caucasus region. He said the observers would help reinstate the cease-fire agreement, report on violations and help to restore the status quo, and try to establish communications between the two sides. The Secretary-General said that if the Council endorsed his proposal, the observers would be deployed as soon as contributing Governments could make them available.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said that the disarmament process must be effectively implemented if the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) is to fulfill its mandate to end the plight of the Somali people and promote reconciliation and reconstruction in their country. He made that comment in a report to the Security Council, dated 1 July, on the implementation of its resolution 837 (1993), which was adopted after Somali gunmen killed 23 Pakistani peace-keepers on 5 June. The Secretary-General said that such attacks were tragic and disturbing, but would not deter the United Nations from its commitment to Somalia.

The Secretary-General said that disarmament actions undertaken by UNOSOM II in the wake of the 5 June incident had largely neutralized heavy weapons and the command and control facilities of the factions responsible for large-scale violations of the cease-fire in Mogadishu. Those actions had also made it clear that attempts to disrupt humanitarian relief supplies could not be tolerated. He made the point that by demonstrating its willingness to pay,

and to exact, the cost of peacemaking, the United Nations might well have saved lives and accelerated the attainment of its goals.

The Secretary-General urged the Somali factions to join UNOSOM II in its mission of peace, disarmament and reconciliation, and stressed that he was determined to make all necessary efforts to implement relevant Security Council resolutions.

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The Tenth United Nations North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, ending its three-day session at Headquarters on Friday, recommended that the United Nations co-sponsor a conference on Jerusalem as part of the international search for peace and justice in Palestine. In adopting, without a vote, a proposal on mobilizing religious organizations, the Symposium recognized that the issue of Jerusalem was vital to the peace process. The recommendation will be presented to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which organized the Symposium.

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A Pledging Conference for Eritrea will be held in Geneva on 6 July to mobilize support and funding for the Programme for Refugee Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Resettlement Areas in Eritrea. The joint appeal of the United Nations and the Government of Eritrea will be seeking $111 million for the 19 months of the Programme's first phase. The Conference will be chaired by Jan Eliasson, Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General, on behalf of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Much of Eritrea's population fled to neighbouring Sudan during 30 years of warfare, which ended in May 1991. Some 70,000 refugees have already returned, and an estimated 430,000 still wish to return, and substantial assistance will be required to provide them with basic services.

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